

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 EB-08 SP-02

AGRE-00 /106 W

-----089542 141846Z /45

R 141126Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRAIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0274

INFO AMEMBASSY BISSAU POUCH

AMEMBASSY DAKAR POUCH

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION GENEVA

UREHDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0007

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PRAIA 0354

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EAGR, CV

SUBJECT: LIVESTOCK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

REF: DAKAR 5994 AND PREVIOUS

1. MISSION WISHES TO ADD FOLLOWING PERITNENT COMMENTS TO
BASICALLY SOUND WRAPUP PROVIDED IN REFTEL.

A. THE DROUGHT IN CAPE VERDE IS NOW IN ITS NINTH YEAR. IT
APPEARS UNLIKELY RPT UNLIKELY THAT SUFFICIENT RAINFALL WILL
FALL THIS YEAR TO ALLOW FOR EITHER A CORN CROP OR FOR THE
GROWTH OF FORAGE. THUS THE ISLANDS FACE A TENTH YEAR OF
DROUGHT.

B. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE LIVESTOCK SITUATION ARE VERY
SERIOUS FOR THE CAPEVERDEAN PEOPLE. THE CATTLE POPULATION
HAS DECREASED FROM 42,000 AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DROUGHT (1968)
TO 14,500 AT PRESENT (GOCV UPDATED ESTIMATE-AUGUST
1978). THE CONDITION OF THESE ANIMALS VARY FROM GOOD
TO PRECARIOUS (MOSTLY CATTLE WHICH ARE ALLOWED TO
ROAM ABOUT THE COUNTRYSIDE). PRIVATE OWNERS WHO ARE IN
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A POSITION TO CARE FOR AND FEED THEIR CATTLE HOLD PERHAPS
3,000 HEAD.

C. THE GOCV SEEMS RELUCTANT TO FACE THE PROSPECTS OF
A FURTHER REDUCTION (FROM 14,500) OF THE CATTLE POPULATION
IN THE ISLANDS. GIVEN THE EMOTIONAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC
ATTACHMENT OF OWNERS TO THEIR CATTLE, A DECISION TO REDUCE
THE POPULATION THROUGH SLAUGHTER WILL NOT BE AN EASY ONE;

IT APPEARS LIKELY HOWEVER THAT NO OTHER REALISTIC CHOICE EXISTS.

D. AS IT APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT SIGNIFICANT RAINFALL WILL OCCUR THIS YEAR, THE GOCV FACES AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT SITUATION IN REGARDS TO LIVESTOCK MAINTENANCE. NOT ONLY DOES THE PROBLEM OF FOOD HANG LIKE THE PROVERBIAL DAMASCHER SWORD BUT TO ADD TO AN ALREADY GRIM PICTURE, WATER RESOURCES AND LEVELS ARE DWINDLING ON SANTIAGO ISLAND (WHICH HAS EIGHTY PERCENT OF CATTLE). THE CRUNCH ON FEED SHOULD HIT ABOUT THE END OF SEPTEMBER (RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNTS OF BEET PULP ARE NOW ARRIVING).

E. IT IS CLEAR THAT CAPE VERDE FACES A CRISIS SITUATION IN THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR. IT IS NOT RPT NOT CLEAR WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT IT. EVEN IF THE GOVERNMENT MAKES THE HARD BUT RATIONAL DECISION TO REDUCE THE CATTLE POPULATION TO 8,000 THAT BY ITSELF WILL NOT RELIEVE THE PRESSURE; PRESENT RESOURCES CANNOT SUSTAIN ANY RPT ANY CATTLE IN THE FEEDING STATIONS. IF ASSISTANCE FROM ANY SOURCE IS UNDER CONSIDERATION THE FOLLOWING FACTORS MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT:

---WITH THE RECENT COMMERCIAL PURCHASE OF TEN THOUSAND (10,000) METRIC TONS OF CORN TO MEET PRESSING HUMAN NEEDS ALONG WITH THE PURCHASE OF MUCH NEEDED MEDICINES, CAPE VERDE FOREIGN EXCHANGE HOLDINGS ARE VERY LOW. EVEN WITH THESE COMMERCIAL PURCHASES OF CORN THE GOCV FACES SERIOUS FOOD SHORTAGES. IN SHORT, THEY MAY RUN OUT OF FOOD FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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HUMAN CONSUMPTION BY THE END OF THE YEAR. THUS CAPE VERDE IS NOT IN A POSITION TO BUY LIVESTOCK RATIONS.

---FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS GOCV SEEMS RELUCTANT TO BEGIN PROCESS OF CULLING AND REDUCING CATTLE POPULATION; CLEARLY DECISION TO SLAUGHTER ANIMALS WILL NOT BE WELCOMED BY FAMILIES WHO HAVE ANIMALS.

---GIVEN THE CONTINUING NATURE OF THE DROUGHT SITUATION IN CAPE VERDE THIS LOOKS LIKE A PROGRAM WHICH MIGHT HAVE TO BE CONTINUED FOR THE INDEFINITE FUTURE. EVEN IF THE HERDS ARE REDUCED TO A TOTAL OF 8,000 OR LESS A MAINTENANCE PROGRAM WILL INVOLVE SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS PER YEAR. OUR ROUGH ESTIMATE FOR BEET PULP (5,000 TONS A YEAR), STRAW (18,000 TONS A YEAR), TRANSPORTATION OF ITEMS TO CAPE VERDE, SALT, MEDICINE, WIRE, ROPE, FEEDING AND WATERING BARRELS AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT IS 3.5 MILLION U.S. PER YEAR.

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R 141126Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRAIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0275
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---SHOULD THE CATTLE HERD BE REDUCED SUBSTANTIALLY
TO SAY 8,000 OR LESS PAST EXPERIENCES INDICATE IT MAY TAKE
TEN-TWELVE YEARS FOR THE POPULATION TO BE REESTABLISHED,
AND THEN ONLY IF GOOD FEEDING AND WATERING CONDITIONS
EXISTED.

--- THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT IN DECEMBER OF 1977
CAPE VERDE PRESIDENT PEREIRA APPEALED TO AMBASSADOR MARKS
FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE IN THE LIVESTOCK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM
(SEE BISSAU A-22 OF DEC 20, 1977). THIS REQUEST WAS OVER-
TAKEN BY EEC ASSISTANCE TO THE ISLANDS. A REPEAT OF SUCH AN
APPEAL IS NOT UNLIKELY.

---GIVEN OUR RECENT TURNDOWN OF REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL
FIVE THOUSAND TONS OF CORN TO MEET HUMAN NEEDS AND IN VIEW
OF CONTINUING PROBLEMS IN THIS SECTOR, GOCV MAY BE
PERPLEXED BY OUR DECISION TO ASSIST IN LIVESTOCK MAINTENANCE
SECTOR.

---FINALLY, CAPE VERDE AND POTENTIAL DONORS ARE WORKING
AGAINST THE CLOCK ON THIS PROBLEM. FEED STOCKS WILL DISAPPEAR
BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER AND WE ARE ALREADY AT THE MIDDLE OF
AUGUST.

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---NEED FOR PROTENN SUPPLEMENT SUCH AS SOYBEAN, LINSEED
OR COTTON SEED OIL MEAL IS BECOMING APPARENT. PERHAPS AS
MUCH AS FIVE POUNDS PER ANIMAL PER WEEK WILL BE NEEDED.

2. CHARGE ACCOMPANIED MESSRS. THOMAS AND TOMSON ON

VISITS TO FEEDING STATIONS AND WAS PRESENT AT ALL BRIEFINGS.
IN ADDITION DURING PAST FEW DAYS HE HAS TALKED PRIVATELY
ABOUT THIS PROBLEM WITH SEVERAL CV AGRONOMISTS AND LIVESTOCK
TECHNICIANS. AID AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER HAS ALSO
TRAVELED TO FOGO ISLAND TO CHECK ON CATTLE SITUATION AND
CONCURS IN THIS TELEGRAM.MCGOWAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LIVESTOCK, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRAIA00354
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780332-0182
Format: TEL
From: PRAIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780867/aaaacecp.tel
Line Count: 176
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 10ee0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AID
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DAKAR 5994
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1748555
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LIVESTOCK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM
TAGS: EAID, EAGR, CV
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/10ee0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014